

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

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FM U S MISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2722

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 3314

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, ELAB, ILO, IS, PFOR

SUBJECT: ILO: MIDDLE EAST ISSUES AT JUNE CONFERENCE

REF: GENEVA 2740

PASS LABOR FOR SEGALL, PERSONS AND QUACKENBUSH

1. SUMMARY. EGYPTIAN LABOR MINISTER AND ARAB TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES IN CAIRO REPORTEDLY STATED THAT THEY DO NOT INTEND TO ATTACK ISRAEL AND THAT THEY HOPE THERE WILL BE NO POLITICAL CLASH ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES AT ANNUAL ILO CONFERENCE IN JUNE. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING RECENT TWO-DAY STOPOVER IN CAIRO, BERNARD FORTIN, ILO DG BLANCHARD'S CHEF DE CABINET AND CONFIDANT, MET SEPARATELY WITH EGYPTIAN LABOR MINISTER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF ARAB TRADE UNIONS (ICATU) AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ARAB LABOR ORGANIZATION (ALO). FORTIN TOLD THEM THAT BLANCHARD HOPED ILO JUNE CONFERENCE (1) WOULD NOT BE OCCASION FOR POLITICAL CLASH OVER MIDDLE EASTERN ISSUES AND (2) THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ATTACK ON "ANY MEMBER STATE" OF ILO. ALL THREE ASSURED HIM THAT THEY SHARED BLANCHARD'S CONCERN.

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EGYPTIAN LABOR MINISTER REPORTEDLY SAID THAT BLANCHARD'S VIEWS

COINCIDED WITH POSITIONS OF GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT AND "OTHER GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED." ICATU SECRETARY GENERAL TOLD FORTIN THAT "NO EXTREME RESOLUTIONS" WERE BEING PREPARED BY HIS ORGANIZATION. ALO REP USED SOMEWHAT VAGUER LANGUAGE BUT WAS ALSO POSITIVE IN RESPONSE TO BOTH POINTS.

3. ILO OFFICIAL WHO GAVE LABATT SUBSTANCE OF FORTIN'S WRITTEN REPORT (FORTIN NOW IN PAKISTAN) ASSUMED THAT RESPONSES TO FORTIN'S SECOND POINT MEANT THAT ARABS NOT PLANNING TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM ILO AT THIS TIME. HE ALSO ASSUMED EGYPTIAN REFERENCE TO "OTHER GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED" MEANT OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS. HE GAVE PERSONAL OPINION THAT ARAB ASSURANCES WERE ENCOURAGING EVEN THOUGH NO ONE COULD BE SURE OF THEIR VALUE IN JUNE. SOURCE ALSO SAID THAT DG HAD ORDERED SUBSTANCE OF CLOSELY HELD REPORT TO BE GIVEN TO ISRAELI AMBASSADOR IN GENEVA AND TO IRVING BROWN, AFL-CIO REPRESENTATIVE IN EUROPE.

4. COMMENT: WHILE STILL EARLY TO BE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC, US REP TO ILO GOVERNING BODY AND CONFERENCE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR POSSIBILITY (PERHAPS IN FIRST DAYS OR EVEN BEFORE ILO CONFERENCE) OF NEGOTIATING LOW PROFILE SCENARIO FOR HANDLING ISRAELI AND PLO ISSUES AT CONFERENCE.ABRAMS

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